

CLAIMS:

What is claimed is:

1 A method of tracking available service plan minutes for a user of a cellular phone, comprising:

3 recording service plan information on said cellular phone;

4 monitoring minute usage for calls on said cellular phone; and

5 displaying available minutes of said service plan on a display device of said
6 cellular phone.

1 2. The method of Claim 1, further comprising prompting a user for input of said
service plan information when an available minute menu option is selected.

2 3. The method of Claim 2, further comprising storing said service plan
information in a memory of said cellular phone.

1 A 4. The method of Claim 3, wherein said service plan information includes a
2 number of peak period minutes and off-peak period minutes and wherein:

3 said monitoring step further comprises separately monitoring said peak period
4 minutes and said off-peak period minutes; and

5 said displaying step further comprises separately displaying a first available
6 minutes output associated with said peak period minutes and a second available
7 minutes output associated with said off-peak period minutes.

1 A
2 5. The method of Claim 4, wherein said displaying step displays only said first
3 available minutes output during a clock time associated with said peak period minutes
4 and displays only said second available minutes output during a next clock time
 associated with said off-peak period minutes.

1 B
2 6. The method of Claim 4, further comprising outputting an alert signal when
3 said available minutes reaches a preselected threshold.

1 C
2 7. The method of Claim 6, wherein said displaying step displays a graphical
3 representation of said available minutes and wherein said alert signal includes flashing
 said graphical representation.

1 D
2 8. The method of Claim 6, wherein said displaying step displays a numerical output.

1 E
2 9. A cellular telephone comprising:

1 F
2 a processor and associated memory;

1 G
2 a display device; and

1 H
2 program code executed by said processor for tracking available service plan
3 minutes for a user of said cellular phone, comprising code for:

1 I
2 recording service plan information on said cellular phone;

7 monitoring minute usage for calls on said cellular phone; and
8 ~~A~~ displaying available minutes of said service plan on said display device.

1 10. The cellular telephone of Claim 9, further comprising program code for prompting
2 a user for input of said service plan information when an available minute menu option is
3 selected.

1 11. The cellular telephone of Claim 10, further comprising program code for storing
2 said service plan information in said memory of said cellular phone.

1 12. The cellular telephone of Claim 11, wherein said service plan information
2 includes a number of peak period minutes and off-peak period minutes and wherein:

3 said monitoring program code further comprises code for separately monitoring
4 said peak period minutes and said off-peak period minutes; and

5 said displaying program code further comprises code for separately displaying a
6 first available minutes output associated with said peak period minutes and a second
7 available minutes output associated with said off-peak period minutes.

1 13. The cellular telephone of Claim 12, wherein said displaying program code
2 displays only said first available minutes output during a clock time associated with said
3 peak period minutes and displays only said second available minutes output during a next
4 clock time associated with said off-peak period minutes.

1 14. The cellular telephone of Claim 12, further comprising program code for
2 outputting an alert signal when said available minutes reaches a preselected threshold.

1 15. The cellular telephone of Claim 12, wherein said displaying program code
2 displays a graphical representation of said available minutes and wherein said alert signal
3 includes flashing said graphical representation.

1 16. The cellular telephone of Claim 12, wherein said displaying program code
2 displays a numerical output.

1 17. A cellular telephone system comprising:

2 a service provider;
3 at least one cellular telephone provided cellular service via said service provider;
4 means for tracking minute usage for calls on said cellular phone; and
5 means for providing a user of said cellular phone with a display of available
6 minutes in a service plan associated with said cellular phone.

1 18. The cellular telephone system of Claim 17, wherein:

2 said tracking means includes monitoring said minute usage at a database of said
3 service provider of said service plan; and

4 said providing means includes transmitting an available minutes output to said
5 cellular phone at a termination of each of said calls, wherein said display includes said
6 transmitted available minutes output.

1 19. The cellular telephone system of Claim 17, wherein said cellular telephone
2 comprises:

3 a processor and associated memory;

4 a display device; and

5 program code executed by said processor for tracking available service plan
6 minutes for a user of said cellular phone, comprising code for:

7 recording service plan information on said cellular phone;

8 monitoring minute usage for calls on said cellular phone; and

9 displaying available minutes of said service plan on said display device.

1 20. The cellular telephone system of Claim 19, wherein said service plan information
2 includes a number of peak period minutes and off-peak period minutes and wherein:

3 said monitoring program code further comprises code for separately monitoring
4 said peak period minutes and said off-peak period minutes; and

5 said displaying program code further comprises code for separately displaying a
6 first available minutes output associated with said peak period minutes and a second
7 available minutes output associated with said off-peak period minutes.